

AMENDING SECTION 3536, REVISED STATUTES.

MARCH 31, 1902.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

Mr. SOUTHARD, from the Committee on Coinage, Weights, and Measures, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 12705.]

The Committee on Coinage, Weights, and Measures, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 12705) to amend section 3536, Revised Statutes of the United States, have considered the same and recommend that the bill do pass.

The effect of the proposed legislation is fully set forth in the following letter from the Director of the Mint:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF DIRECTOR OF THE MINT,
Washington, March 4, 1902.

DEAR SIR: Referring to our conversation upon the subject of an amendment to section 3536 of the Revised Statutes, relative to variations in weight permitted the coiner upon the silver coins, I beg to submit herewith the amendment proposed.

The effect of this amendment is to remove all restrictions upon the coiner as to weight of the silver coins, save that they shall be within the prescribed limits of tolerance. Under the statute as it now stands, not only is each piece required to be within the limits of tolerance, which is one and one-half grains above or below standard, but in each delivery of a large number of pieces it is required that the number above and the number below standard shall be practically equal. The importance of this, where the standard coins are concerned, is apparent, for it is desirable to assure all the world that the output of these coins from our mints will average the legal standard weight.

When this provision was first enacted as to our silver coins they were standard coins and the provision was a necessary one. Now, however, that they are simply token coins which do not pass out of the country and are not valued on the basis of their bullion contents, the requirement is superfluous, and as it entails a large amount of additional work upon the coiner, its repeal is desirable. The practical effect of the requirement is that the coiner must keep his light and heavy planchets separated and offset an equal amount of one against the other, and if his operations do not yield equal amounts of each he proceeds to make heavies or lights as the delivery may require.

In the opinion of experienced workmen and officials the output of the Mint upon these coins could be increased 20 per cent by the repeal of this requirement. It is of

no practical value, the only important restriction being that each coin issued shall be within a grain and a half of the standard prescribed by law.

I respectfully recommend that this measure receive the indorsement of your committee, and that you use your efforts to have it become a law.

Respectfully,

GEORGE E. ROBERTS,
Director of the Mint.

Approved:

L. M. SHAW,
Secretary.

Hon. J. H. SOUTHARD,
Chairman Committee Coinage, Weights, and Measures,
House of Representatives.

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